

The initial construction will be completed by September, 1969, and the five school buildings in Firth, Hickman, Roca, Panama, and Cortland will be closed. These new school buildings, when completed, will be quite adequate to serve the school children in Firth for the Planning Period.

#### PUBLIC BUILDINGS

##### Existing Public Buildings

City Hall - There is no City Hall in Firth. The Village Board has its regular meetings conducted in the Firth State Bank. The Planning Commission meetings and other public activities were usually held in the Legion Hall which is located at First and May Streets. The Legion Hall was built in 1903 and has a dimension of 35 feet by 50 feet. It has tables and chairs for public meetings, and a kitchenette at the rear to prepare coffee and refreshments for the social meetings. The building is in poor condition, and the heating and lighting fixtures are very much outdated.

Fire Hall - It is located at Third and Nemaha Streets, and has a dimension of 25 feet by 30 feet. The building was constructed in 1959, and is in very good condition. There are two fire trucks, 15 voluntary firemen in the Village and 15 rural area voluntary firemen. They have fire drills once or twice a year. Illustration 18 entitled Fire District shows

the area where the Firth voluntary fire department will respond in case of fire. The fire district encompasses an area of about 44 square miles.

Police Station - The Village of Firth does not have a police station. The Lancaster County sheriffs are responsible for the Village's law enforcement. The County sheriffs visit the Village once every day, and will respond to calls in case of emergency. The jail was built in 1910, and is located next to the fire hall. The jail facility is seldom used since most of the arrests are confined in the County Jail in Lincoln.

County Maintenance Shop - It is located at May Street and County road 395. This is the only County building in the Village, and it has a dimension of 25 feet by 35 feet. The building is in sound condition and is used for the storage of road maintenance equipment.

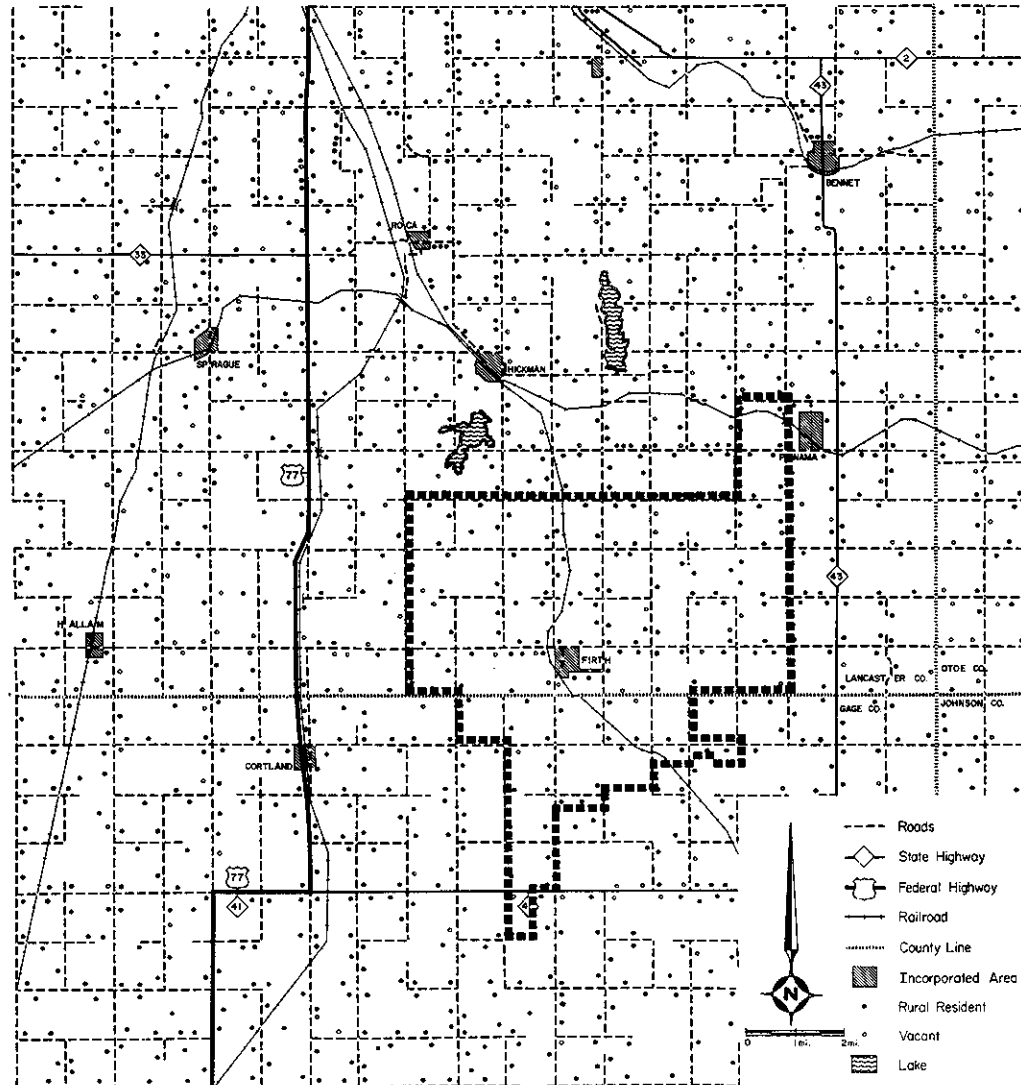
Post Office - The post office is located at Third and Nemaha Streets west of the bank. It was constructed in 1915, and was used as a drug store, tavern and bakery. In 1947, the building was converted into the present post office. It is a third class post office, and according to the postmaster, the present facility will not be adequate for the next 20 years. The following are the post office

# FIRE DISTRICT

Illustration 18

URBAN PLANNING GRANT Project No. Neb. P-40

The preparation of this map was financed in part through an urban planning assistance grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended.



receipts for the past five years:

Table 19

POST OFFICE RECEIPTS  
Firth, Nebraska  
1963 - 1967

<u>Year</u>	<u>Receipts</u>
1963	\$3233.00
1964	4734.00
1965	4792.00
1966	5007.30
1967	5213.40

The postal receipts have increased steadily for the past five years. This is a reflection of both postage increase and increase in postal activities.

Cemetery - The Firth Cemetery is located about half a mile south of the corporate limits at the Lancaster and Gage County Line. It has an area of approximately 10 acres, and is now about 90 per cent filled. The present site will not be adequate for the next 20 years, but there is room for expansion to the north and east.

Other Public Buildings - There are no medical, dental, or hospital facilities, city auditorium, or library in the community. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission recommends that a public library be provided even though the size of a community is less than 500 people.

Recommendations

1. A Government Center, which will be a combination of City Hall, City Auditorium, library and police department, should be built as soon as financial condition of the Village permits. There are several methods of financing the City Hall and they should be investigated by the Planning Commission and the Village Board to see which method will suit the needs of the Village. The methods of financing are:

- A. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development administers advances for public works planning and public facilities loans. Section 702, Public Law 560, provides that funds may be advanced to states, municipalities, and other non-federal public agencies to help finance the planning of public facilities, such as government centers and city halls. These advances are repaid without interest when construction begins or contracts are awarded.
- B. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development also administers a program of loans for the construction of public facilities where financing is not available on any other reasonable basis. Interest rates are established at the time applications are accepted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

C. Another possible method of receiving federal assistance is if the government center is part of a planned urban renewal program or neighborhood development program. In such cases the financing of the governmental center might be assisted indirectly by the total financial plan of the overall program.

D. Lease-Purchase. A few cities, largely in California, have constructed a city hall through a lease-purchase agreement. A private party agrees to build the city hall at no initial cost to the city. The city in turn agrees to lease for a specific number of years. A specified yearly "rental" is agreed upon. At the end of the lease period, the city owns the property outright. Costa Mesa, California, was successful in financing its city hall in this manner. The lease-purchase plan has the main advantage of avoiding legal debt limits. The theory is simply that rent to fall due beyond the current rent period is not a debt. This method also may avoid a vote of the people to approve a general bond issue when state law requires a vote.

E. Revenue Bond Issue. Some states have authorized financing a city hall by revenue bonds. Where this device is used, state statutes usually provide for the creation of a public building authority. The authority is given the power to construct public buildings and issue revenue bonds to finance said construction. In turn, the city agrees to pay rent to the authority until the bonds are retired. In practice, this is similar to the lease-purchase plan except that a public body is created to raise the money.

F. Internal Financing. A few cities have been able to finance the city hall by borrowing from city trust funds such as cemetery endowments. Bountiful, Utah, borrowed \$90,000 from trust funds and pledged the revenue from a sales tax increase to repay the loan.

2. A minimum of one regular peace officer with provision for relief for vacation and days off should be provided for the Village. Any person vested with the authority and responsibility of a peace officer should be morally, mentally, and physically acceptable to assume the responsibilities, and should have at least a basic knowledge of the learnings and skills for adequate performance of all assigned responsibilities.

3. The fire protection standard established by the State Fire Marshal shall be used as a guide for the Village. The requirements are as follows:

A. Required Class of Fire Rating:  
Class 8

B. Training

The fire chief of the Village must certify that the community's fire department (volunteer or regular) meets all of the following specific requirements:

1. At least 90 per cent of all personnel attend and take active part in training classes which must be held at least once a month.
2. Each member of the fire department must have a certificate indicating no less than a fifteen hour Basic Firemanship course within one year after joining the department.
3. Officers in each department must have a certificate indicating no less than an eighteen hour Fire Department Administration course within one year after being elected to any office of your Fire Department.

4. Fire Department shall also conduct a continuous Fire Prevention Program.

5. At least four full-time or volunteer members of each department must attend annual State Fire School each year.

6. At least three members of each department must attend all regular scheduled area mutual aid meetings and schools.

C. Fire Prevention Program

The Fire Chief of the Village must certify in writing that the department has launched a Fire Prevention Program which includes at least the following elements:

1. Removal of dry vegetation and other flammable material from hazardous areas.
2. Have an annual inspection of business buildings by the fire department.
3. Attempt to condemn and remove all dilapidated structures and other hazards through the assistance provided by the State Fire Marshal or through other acceptable methods.

4. Establish a Junior Fire Patrol.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Water System - The water supply system in Firth consists of two wells with an intake structure and a service pump, a distribution system, and an elevated storage tank. The system has 4809 feet of 2-inch pipes, 5545.9 feet of 4-inch pipes, 1408.3 feet of 6-inch pipes, and 550 feet of 3/4-inch pipes which are all cast iron. There are 14 valves ranging from 2 inches to 6 inches, and 17 fire hydrants. The water storage tank was built in August, 1947, with a capacity of 40,000 gallons.

A water analysis was made by the Nebraska Health Department in February, 1966. The analysis indicates that the quality of water is good and suitable for domestic use without treatment. The analysis also shows that the hardness is above average, and the amount of fluoride is below that recommended to reduce dental cavities.

Table 20

WATER ANALYSIS

<u>Item</u>	<u>Well No. 1</u>
pH	7.5
Total Solids	800
Total Iron	0.0
Manganese	0.0
Fluoride	0.4
Alkalinity	340
Hardness	480
Calcium	131
Magnesium	37
Nitrate	33.7
Chloride	82
Sulfates	15
Sodium	87
Potassium	5

(All units in milligrams per liter except pH)

Source: Nebraska Department of Health

The water system is adequate for the present population, but several deficiencies should be corrected:

1. There are two dead ends in the system, one at First and Nemaha, the other at Fourth and Nemaha. Dead ends often cause taste and odor, and accumulate rust which also causes stains and discoloration of clothing, fixtures and plumbing.